

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9409

To require the Secretary of Defense to conduct an audit and analysis of light pollution at certain Department of Defense facilities, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 23, 2024

Ms. SHERRILL introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Defense to conduct an audit and analysis of light pollution at certain Department of Defense facilities, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “DoD Dark Sky Stew-
5 ardship Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. REDUCTION OF LIGHT POLLUTION AT DEPART-**
7 **MENT OF DEFENSE FACILITIES.**

8 (a) AUDIT.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months
2 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and con-
3 currently with the study required under subsection
4 (b), the Secretary of Defense shall complete an audit
5 of light pollution at the facilities selected pursuant
6 to paragraph (2). Under such audit, the Secretary
7 shall—

8 (A) evaluate the lighting used at such fa-
9 cilities, with a focus on unshielded lighting;

10 (B) determine whether any lighting fix-
11 tures are unnecessary;

12 (C) determine whether any areas—

13 (i) are unnecessarily lit; or

14 (ii) are overlit and are suitable for
15 lower ambient light under United Facilities
16 Criteria 3–530–01;

17 (D) identify any lighting or design trends
18 across such facilities that contribute to light
19 pollution; and

20 (E) include a plan for reducing unneces-
21 sary lighting, overlit areas, and other sources of
22 light pollution at such facilities.

23 (2) AUDITED FACILITIES.—The Secretary of
24 Defense shall—

1 (A) select the Department of Defense fa-
2 cilities to be included in the audit under para-
3 graph (1); and

4 (B) to the extent practicable, ensure that
5 the group of such selected facilities is a rep-
6 resentative sample of Department of Defense
7 facilities with respect to size, form, function,
8 and geographic location.

9 (3) PLAN DEADLINE.—Not later than 6 months
10 after the audit required under paragraph (1) is com-
11 pleted, the Secretary of Defense shall implement the
12 plan included in such audit.

13 (b) STUDY.—Not later than 18 months after the date
14 of the enactment of this Act, and concurrently with the
15 audit required under subsection (a)(1), the Secretary of
16 Defense shall conduct a study of light pollution at Depart-
17 ment of Defense facilities. In conducting the study, the
18 Secretary shall—

19 (1) examine how light pollution affects Depart-
20 ment of Defense operations and readiness;

21 (2) examine how light pollution affects biodiver-
22 sity near Department of Defense facilities;

23 (3) evaluate the effectiveness of compatible use
24 buffer zones and other techniques already in use to

1 mitigate light pollution and its harmful effects at
2 Department of Defense facilities;

3 (4) evaluate the necessity and purpose of any
4 unshielded lights at Department of Defense facili-
5 ties;

6 (5) examine the use of additional light pollution
7 mitigation technologies, processes, and policies to
8 mitigate light pollution at Department of Defense
9 facilities, including increasing the use of warm-light
10 and low-output light-emitting diode lights and de-
11 creasing the use of cool-light and high-output light-
12 emitting diode lights;

13 (6) examine the feasibility of establishing dark
14 sky standards for Department of Defense facilities;

15 (7) identify and analyze Federal, State, and
16 local rules, regulations, and policies that support or
17 inhibit the ability of the Secretary of Defense to
18 mitigate light pollution at Department of Defense
19 facilities; and

20 (8) evaluate ongoing and potential additional
21 initiatives at Department of Defense facilities to reg-
22 ulate lighting standards, including how such initia-
23 tives could be expanded without compromising na-
24 tional security or the mission, safety, or security of
25 any such facility.

1 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the com-
2 pletion of the audit required under subsection (a)(1) and
3 the study required under subsection (b), the Secretary of
4 Defense shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services
5 of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Nat-
6 ural Resources of the House of Representatives, the Com-
7 mittee on Armed Services of the Senate, and the Com-
8 mittee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate
9 a report, which shall include—

10 (1) the results of the audit required under sub-
11 section (a)(1), including the methodology, findings,
12 and recommendations of such audit;

13 (2) the results of the study required under sub-
14 section (b), including unclassified examples of how
15 light pollution affects Department of Defense oper-
16 ations and readiness;

17 (3) identification of the funds, resources, and
18 additional authorities required to execute any plans
19 or recommendations developed pursuant to the study
20 required under subsection (b);

21 (4) recommendations for expanding or starting
22 collaborative efforts with local communities that are
23 located near Department of Defense facilities to
24 limit light pollution;

1 (5) recommendations for protecting biodiversity
2 near Department of Defense facilities from light pol-
3 lution without harming Department of Defense oper-
4 ations and readiness; and

5 (6) recommendations on whether and, if appli-
6 cable, how the Department of Defense could create
7 and implement dark sky standards for Department
8 of Defense facilities.

9 (d) PILOT PROJECTS.—The Secretary of Defense
10 may establish pilot projects to reduce light pollution at De-
11 partment of Defense facilities based on the results of the
12 study required under subsection (b).

13 (e) DEPARTMENT SECURITY.—The Secretary of De-
14 fense shall ensure that the safety, security, and readiness
15 of the Department of Defense is not negatively affected
16 by—

17 (1) the audit required under subsection (a)(1);

18 (2) the implementation of the plan included in
19 such audit; or

20 (3) any pilot project established under sub-
21 section (d).

22 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

23 (1) The term “dark sky standards” means a
24 group of policies, guidelines, or requirements that—

25 (A) reduce light pollution;

1 (B) limit artificial light to areas where
2 such light is intended to be used; and

3 (C) protect the natural darkness of an out-
4 door location.

5 (2) The term “Department of Defense facility”
6 means any structure, building, training area, or
7 other infrastructure of a military installation, includ-
8 ing a roadway or defense access road, and any other
9 area on the grounds of a military installation that
10 is under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Defense
11 or the Secretary of a military department.

12 (3) The term “light pollution” means artificial
13 light that emanates from buildings or other human-
14 made structures that—

15 (A) expands onto adjacent properties and
16 is unnecessary in regards to the purpose or use
17 of such adjacent property; or

18 (B) degrades the visibility of the sky at
19 night.

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